

The DALLAS POST

50¢

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Gas pipeline worries still haunt some local residents

By SARAH HITE
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A marked-off area along a Dallas Township road has spurred concerns among residents as some wonder where a proposed natural gas compressor station will be relocated in the township.

While residents have been concerned about stakes along Sedlar Lane, Williams Field Services Co. LLC officials confirmed Tuesday there is only a pipeline being laid along the road and not a compressor station.

Luzerne County Court docu-

ments filed on March 17 show the land along Sedlar Road is owned by John Metz, and the 75-foot right of way pipeline easement agreement was made in August 2010.

Helen Humphreys, a communications specialist for Williams, said there are only as many stakes as the company needs for surveying and construction purposes.

"One of the first series of stakes marks where the pipeline will actually be installed," said Mike Dickinson, manager of operations and technical services in the Appalachian basin. "Then as

STILL AHEAD ...

Chief Gathering LLC. has not yet announced the location of a Dallas Township compressor station. The company will participate in a zoning hearing at 7 p.m. April 4 in the Dallas Middle School auditorium in its application to build a metering station near the Dallas schools.

you move to right or left, there are typically at least two other lines that mark construction of the right-of-way area.

"Along this project, there is a 75-foot wide right-of-way for construction purposes," he continued. "The pipeline may be turning or crossing, going under our road or coming up on stream or

wetland and the workspace becomes wider to ensure we have enough room to properly address that construction issue.

Residents along the road expressed concerns last week about the possibility of a compressor station near their homes, and some planned to take action whether the rumor was true or

not.

"Some of us on Sedlar are mustering a bit to see if we can establish some sort of coalition to fight against it," said resident Jim Skrypek. "We're prepared to take some sort of action."

Williams also filed an application for special exceptions in the township office Monday to build a metering facility about 500 feet from the proposed Chief Gathering LLC metering station site.

The site will be located off Lower Demunds Road on about 2 of 4 acres of property owned by William and Priscilla Perry of Franklin Township, about a half-

mile from the Dallas schools.

Eduardo Nunez, facilities project manager at Williams, said the facility will contain a metering building; a 100-foot communications tower; two 3,000-gallon tanks of mercaptan, an odorant used to give natural gas its characteristic smell; various piping, tanks and valves, such as a condensate tank, to collect water deposits from the gas, and a pig receiver to clean materials from the gas.

While some of the equipment may be similar to that of a com-

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Clinic expands to include eye exams, eyeglasses

By SARAH HITE
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The Hope Center of the Back Mountain Harvest Assembly Church in Trucksville has become - literally - a sight for sore eyes within the last month.

The free clinic, which offers medical, legal and pastoral care for those without insurance or who can't afford it, recently extended its hours to Thursday evenings from 6 to 8 p.m. for a vision clinic.

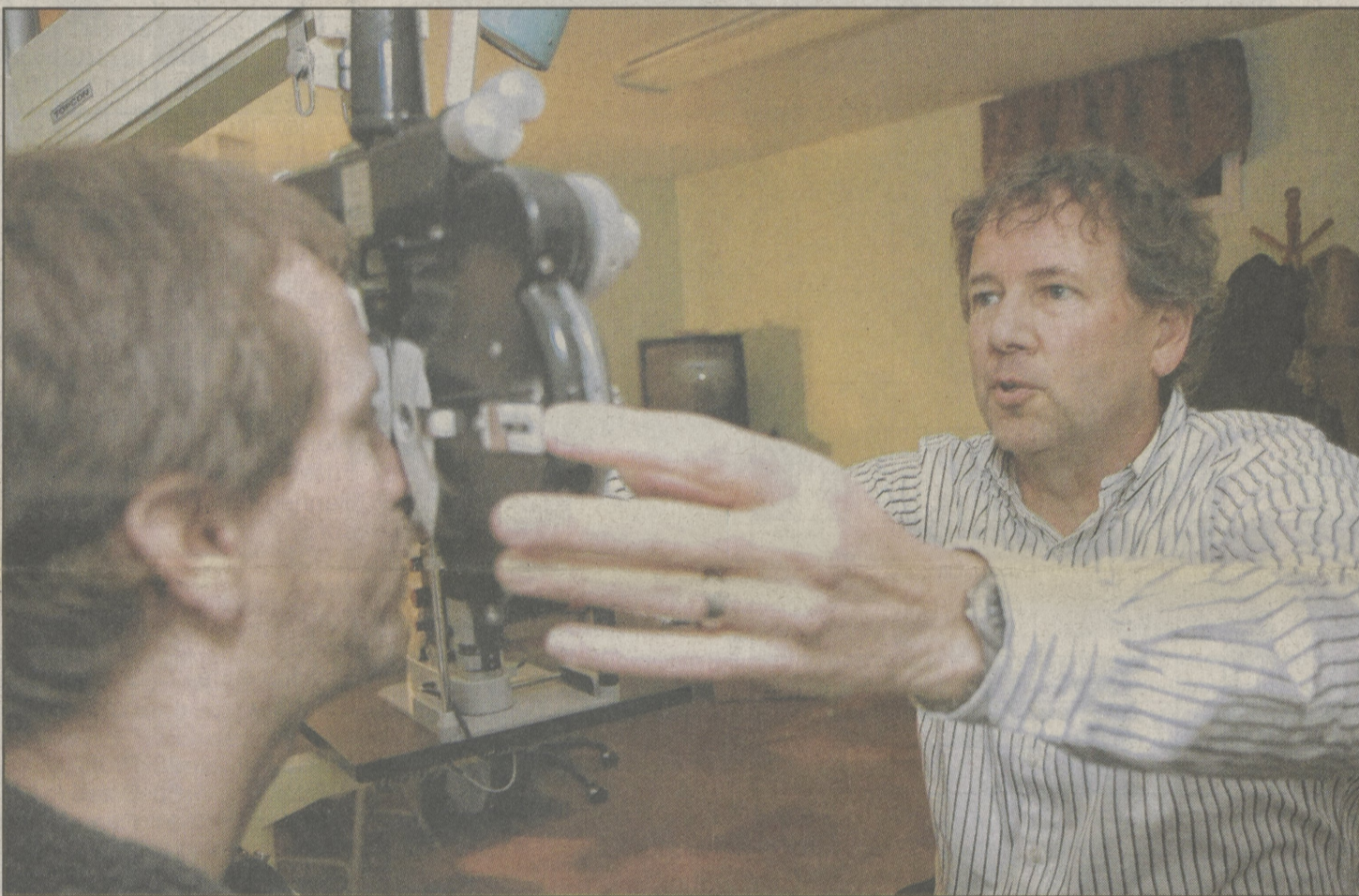
Local optometrist Dr. Robert Blase, of Dallas, is able to provide eye exams free of charge, and the clinic has received ophthalmic equipment, eyeglass frames and lens services from local businesses.

Ron Hillard and his wife Suzanne, directors of the Hope Center, said the program began in February and services about six patients a week. Patrons receive an eye exam and get measured for specs all in one visit and return for a pair of eyeglasses about two weeks later.

Jason Hall, 36, of Trucksville, picked up his very first pair of glasses on a recent Thursday evening. The missionary said putting on glasses for the first time was like "flicking on a switch."

"It's awesome," he said of the Hope Center.

Joe Holthlander, 23, of Wilkes-Barre said he's had the same pair of specs for the past eight years because he lost his medical coverage. He said being able to receive eyewear for free helps offset costs for other household ex-



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Optometrist Rob Blase, of Dallas, examines the eyes of Matthew Kubicki who will receive free reading glasses from a free vision clinic at the Back Mountain Harvest Assembly Church on Carverton Road in Trucksville.

penses.

"People can come here and get what they need," he said.

The Hillards are using the newly-acquired equipment as part of a three-year program they devised in order to provide vision, dental and hearing care to children all over the Wyoming Valley.

The "See the Light" Vision Ministry program will provide free eye exams and eyeglasses to children between the ages of 5

and 18 who either do not have vision insurance or have state-funded medical coverage but cannot afford uninsured expenses.

After spending time as medical missionaries in countries such as Nicaragua and Haiti over the years, the couple realized there is a need for similar services at home.

"We saw a lot of families really struggling who don't have a lot," said Ron.

THE HOPE CENTER

The Hope Center is located near the Back Mountain Harvest Assembly Church on Carverton Road and is open from 6 to 8 p.m. on Mondays for medical, legal and pastoral care and Thursdays for vision and chiropractic care. To make an appointment or for more information, call 696-1128.

The Hope Center plans to have a dental office by June this year, and hearing facilities sometime next year.

"We can't help everyone, but

we can help some," said Ron. "The more kids we help in the Valley, the better chance at life they will have, and the better the Valley will be."

What others are doing

Recent developments in Dallas Township and other areas have caused municipal leaders to think more about how the natural gas industry affects communities.

Here's a glance at what Back Mountain municipalities are doing in regards to the natural gas industry.

Dallas Borough

Solicitor Jeffrey Malak said the borough already has provisions for gas and oil industry activities in an updated zoning ordinance passed in December 2009. Malak said the ordinance addresses issues such as truck traffic, road maintenance, light and water pollution, buffer zones for neighboring structures and subdivision and land development requirements, among others. He added the borough is monitoring state court cases to see if the ordinance needs updating, but maintains the current document could hold up in court against the state Gas and Oil Act.

Dallas Township

At the most recent supervisors meeting, Solicitor Thomas Brennan said he hopes to present a model ordinance prepared by the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS) to the supervisors with-

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Gate of Heaven students who submitted an experiment to NASA are, from left, first row, Kurtis Carichner, Molly Hampsey, Anthony Huntington. Second row, Maria Khoudary, Michael Gatusky, Jamie Cart and Mrs. Janice Szczechowicz, advisor.

Gate of Heaven experiment is on its way to outer space

By SARAH HITE
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Six students from Gate of Heaven Middle School in Dallas are reaching outside the classroom - and into outer space - to learn more about science principles.

Eighth-graders annually participate in various National Aeronautics and Space Administration-sponsored educational programs and this year's team was chosen as a finalist in three different competitions, one of which could send the young scientists to Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

The first, called "Kids in Micro-g," asked students in grades 5-8 to use everyday office sup-

plies in creating an experiment to be proven in a zero gravity environment. Students had one week to create a hypothesis and an experiment for astronauts to perform at the International Space Station to be proven correct or incorrect.

The Gate of Heaven students also had to videotape and submit a written proposal to be considered, and, as finalists, astronauts will send them a video recording of the experiment performed in space.

The six-student team - Kurtis Carichner, 14, of Tunkhannock;

Jamie Carty, 13, of Harveys Lake; Michael Gatusky, 14, of Harveys Lake; Molly Hampsey, 14, of Tunkhannock; Anthony Huntington, 13, of Dallas; and Maria Khoudary, 14, of Dallas -

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